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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/017,462	12/14/2001	Martin T. Pearson	130109.442	5276
500	7590	12/19/2005	EXAMINER	
SEED INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW GROUP PLLC 701 FIFTH AVE SUITE 6300 SEATTLE, WA 98104-7092			MARTIN, ANGELA J	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	
		1745		

DATE MAILED: 12/19/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/017,462	PEARSON, MARTIN T.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Angela J. Martin	1745	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 September 2005.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 16-34 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>9/21/05</u> .	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ .

DETAILED ACTION

This Office Action is responsive to the Remarks filed on September 21, 2005. However, a new rejection is presented for the following reasons of record.

Double Patenting

1. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

2. Claims 16-34 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-31 of U.S. Patent No. 6,573,682 B1. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because they each disclose a fuel cell system having a fuel cell stack and battery, a series pass element, a regulating circuit for regulating current through the series pass element in response to a greater of a battery charging current error, a battery voltage error, and a stack current error.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 16-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rey, U.S. Pat. No. 3,823,358, in view of Iwase, U.S. Pat. No. 56,255,008 B1, and in further view of Hauer, U.S. Pat. No. 6,214,484 B1.

Rejection of claims 16-34 drawn to a control circuit for a fuel cell system.

Rey teaches a control circuit for a fuel cell system having a fuel cell stack and a battery (abstract), the circuit comprising a series pass element electrically coupleable between a portion of the fuel cell stack and a portion of the battery (col. 1, lines 63-67 and col. 2, lines 1-5; lines 44-58), and a regulating circuit for regulating current through the series pass element (col. 1, lines 63-67 and col. 2, lines 1-19). It teaches a diode for isolating the peaking battery from the fuel cell when the fuel cell voltage exceeds the battery open circuit voltage (col. 2, lines 3-5). It teaches diodes and their connections in the system (col. 3, lines 1-14; col. 5, lines 23-25). It teaches a voltage sensor (col. 3, lines 20-34).

Iwase teaches a battery charging current error integrator, a battery voltage error integrator, a stack current error integrator (col. 5, lines 14-28). It teaches diodes and regulating circuit (col. 5, lines 38-59). It teaches a microprocessor (col. 5, lines 14-28). It teaches analog circuit (col. 4, lines 61-67). It teaches current limits (col. 17, lines 5-49).

Hauer teaches a temperature sensor (col. 2, lines 1-8). It teaches means for applying a signal (col. 3, lines 3-23).

Thus, it would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to insert the teachings of Iwase and Hauer, into the teachings of Rey because Iwase teaches a microprocessor for the regulation and control of the fuel cell system and Hauer teaches a temperature sensor and signal, which would provide additional safety measures.

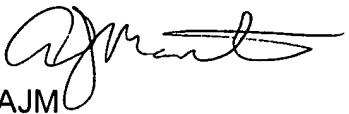
Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments with respect to above claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Angela J. Martin whose telephone number is 571-272-1288. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Patrick Ryan can be reached on 571-272-1292. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



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